



Statement of Senator Feinstein on U.S. District Court Ruling Upholding
the California Financial Information Privacy Act
July 2, 2004

Washington, DC – On Wednesday U.S. District Court Judge Morrison C. England Jr. upheld the California Financial Privacy Act authored by state Senator Jackie Speier (*D-San Mateo*) and signed into law last August.

U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (*D-Calif.*) issued the following statement today in reaction to the ruling:

“This ruling is a great victory for California consumers. In an age of fast-changing technology and business consolidation, the privacy of consumers’ personal data has never been less secure. The California Financial Privacy Act addresses this problem by providing Californians with the nation’s best protection against corporations that share personal data. The law lets consumers choose not to allow companies to share consumer data with their affiliates. And it requires companies to get consumers’ express consent to share personal data with other companies.

I applaud Judge England’s ruling that California has the right to enact laws to protect the financial privacy of its residents, above and beyond what federal law allows. As Judge England wrote in upholding the Act, ‘Congress intended that states be afforded the right to regulate consumer financial privacy on behalf of their citizens.’ This law was four years in the making. Thanks to Judge England’s decision, the Act took effect on July 1, giving Californians more protection than even federal law provides.

The ruling is especially welcome given that Senator Barbara Boxer and I tried to amend the federal Fair Credit Reporting Act last year to provide the same strong consumer protections that California’s law provides. The Senate, unfortunately, failed to provide consumers nationwide with those same protections. Now, thanks to Judge England’s strongly reasoned decision, Californians, at least, will be able to protect their personal data. Once the nation sees the benefits that California’s consumers reap from the California Financial Privacy Act, I am hopeful that we will be able to provide the same protections in federal law.”

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